Choosing the best business school begins here.
Going to business school is a big decision. Whether you’re exploring a new career path or pursuing a degree in something you’ve always been passionate about, investing in your education is a decision that will change your future.

You get the inside track on how a business works – everything from accounting and finance to marketing and management – and how each of those components fit together.

You might have the next best thing built in your garage, or a brilliant idea sketched on the back of a napkin or on your tablet. A business degree gives you the tools you need to get your big idea off the ground and be in business for yourself.

Companies are global, technology connects us in ways we never thought possible. Business schools have the distinct advantage of collaborating with global organizations to identify and solve problems through student insight and expertise.

It’s personal. Even the most seasoned professionals want to attain the next level of personal fulfillment – and for many, an advanced degree is the way to do it. Applying your own personal drive, commitment, intelligence, creativity, and management style to a business program could help you discover your hidden talents.

You’ll study alongside smart, driven people who want the same thing, and you’ll motivate each other to do your best.
Business is no longer business as usual, and business schools are answering that call by integrating creative ways for students to gain hands-on experience – it’s not the lecture-and-learn environment you may expect. You’ll be collaborating with some of the best educators in their fields, alongside students from all walks of life and parts of the world.

No matter which school you choose, make sure you’ve learned enough about it in order to actually picture yourself there – on campus, online, in the classroom, or interacting with your professors. Talk to as many people on campus as you can, from admissions counselors and professors to alumni and current students.

THINGS TO ASK...

1. What are your institution’s academic specialties? What makes your institution distinctive from the others I’m considering?
2. What characteristics does a ‘typical’ student pursuing this degree have? (GMAT, average work experience, etc.)
3. Tell me about the career services offered to current students and alumni. Is there job placement data available for recent grads in your field of interest?

1. What characteristics does a student need to succeed (and excel) in this program?
2. What will be my toughest challenge in this program?
3. What is the most important thing I will learn from this program?

1. What did you wish you knew before going into this program?
2. What was the most interesting project you’ve worked on in your program?
3. How has this program/professor/institution prepared you for the next step in your career?
You may already have a ‘short list’ of schools you’re considering for a variety of reasons, but before you start crossing schools off the list – or adding to it – take a step back and consider the following:

**Faculty and Curriculum**

Seek out schools that have specializations or programs that focus on the topics that mean the most to you, either personally or professionally.

**Here’s how:**

- Review the program’s course requirements, and how many credit hours of each discipline you’re required to take.
- Connect with the faculty teaching in your program. Ask to see a syllabus, and learn about the professor and their background. Today’s faculty includes academic/research focused experts and seasoned professionals, offering a variety of teaching methods and approaches to learning.
- Talk to current students and alumni—get the real story on what the coursework is like, how much time they dedicate to studying, and how to navigate the program you’re interested in.

**Rankings**

Major business school rankings publications like *US News & World Report*, *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg*, the *Economist*, and *Forbes* (to name a few), reveal their lists of “top” and “best” business programs both regionally and globally.

These rankings measure a variety of data, across categories like admission rates, accreditation standing, job placement, alumni earnings, and faculty productivity.

Not all factors that go into business school rankings may be relevant or of interest to you—so look beyond the list and into the methodologies.

**Accreditation**

Specialized accreditation is one way of assuring a program’s excellence, without placing schools in a hierarchy of features the way rankings can.

Only the best business schools in the world have earned AACSB Accreditation. They are forward-thinking, innovative, and acutely aware of the challenges facing business today. They consistently deliver on their promise to prepare the next generation of leaders.

Alumni from AACSB-accredited schools have been educated by leading professionals and academic experts in their fields and have the skills to drive business forward.

To search and evaluate all of the AACSB-accredited business schools around the world, visit [bestbusinessschools.com](http://bestbusinessschools.com).

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Weighing all of your options can be tricky, so use this worksheet to help map things out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>DEGREE TYPE (MBA, Masters specialization)</th>
<th>PROGRAM TYPE (Full time, part time, executive)</th>
<th>PROGRAM DELIVERY (Classroom, online, hybrid)</th>
<th>LENGTH OF PROGRAM</th>
<th>ENROLLMENT DATE/TERM</th>
<th>APPLICATION FEE AND DEADLINE</th>
<th>WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>GMAT REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>TOEFL REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>ESTIMATED COSTS (per year)</th>
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Also keep in mind your personal and professional life, if you are currently working. Does the program you are interested in meet mostly at night? On the weekends? Is there travel involved? Will your employer accommodate your schedule, should you need to be out of the office? Can you balance your familial obligations and personal life, once you add in class time and the required ‘out of class’ study time?
Application dates and program start dates vary from school to school, program to program.

Pay special attention to tuition and fees, as well as when those funds are due. If your employer offers a tuition reimbursement benefit, be sure to get the details of their program before applying.

Develop an articulate reason as to why you want to attend the business school you are applying to, the skills and traits you bring to the program, and what you hope to gain or achieve by earning your degree. Remember: each school you apply to is different, and your reason for attending should be thoughtfully directed towards that school.

Make sure you are financially stable enough to assume the fiscal responsibility of attending business school. Seek out information regarding federal funding, and your individual loan options.

NOTES:

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For more information on AACSB Accreditation, business education, and how to choose the best school for you, go to bestbusinessschools.com